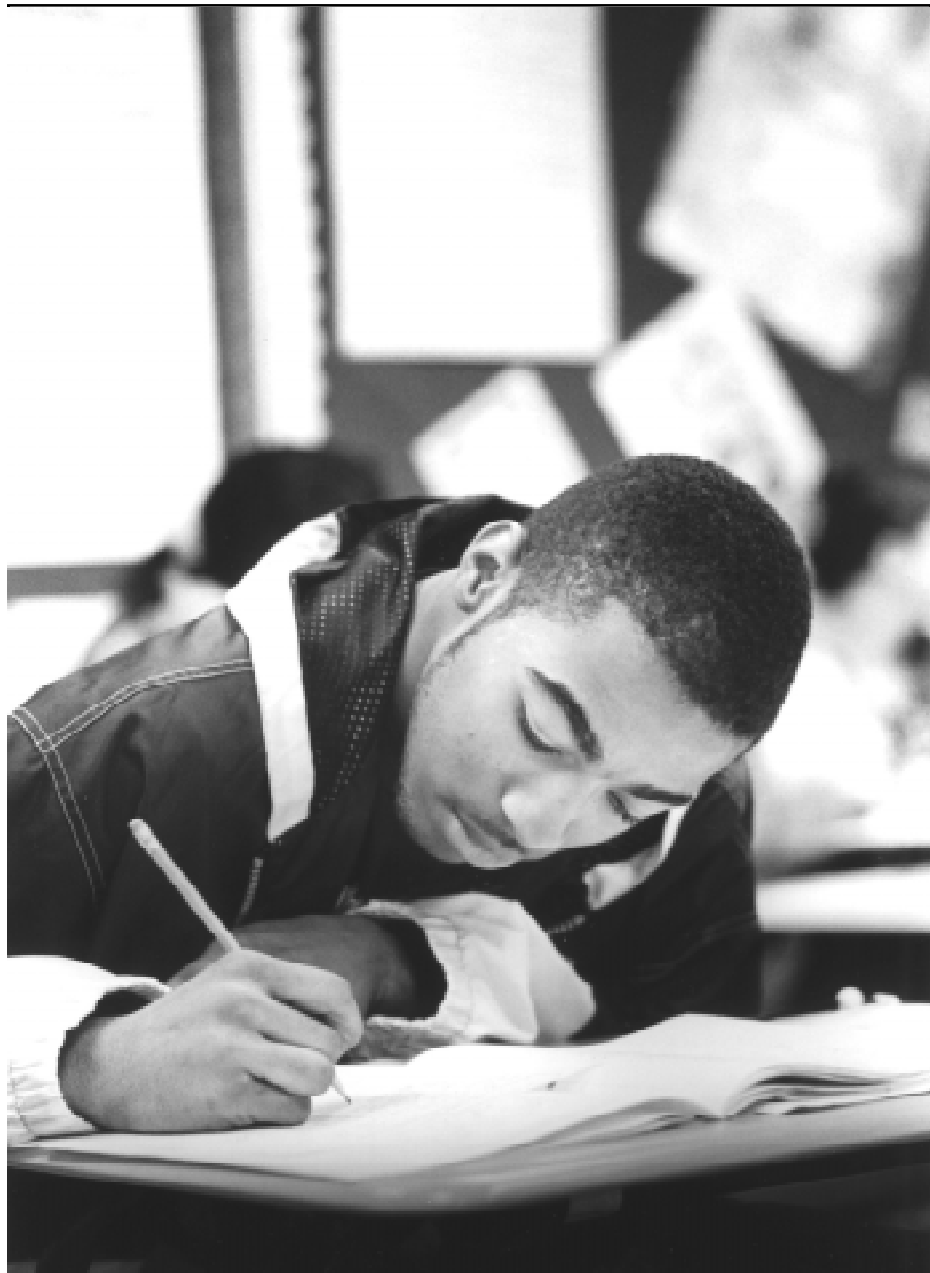


# Kentucky Teacher

## KIRIS Scores Show Gains at All Levels

By Lisa Y. Gross  
Kentucky Department of Education



Photos by Rick McComb

Mario Martin concentrates during Spring 1997 KIRIS testing at Valley High School in Jefferson County.

At right: Fourth-graders get down to business as KIRIS test booklets are distributed at Fayette County's Arlington Elementary.

Scores from the latest round of Kentucky Instructional Results Information System (KIRIS) testing show that student achievement is up at all levels — elementary, middle and high school — throughout the state.

The greatest gains came in reading and mathematics, with a reduction in the proportion of students scoring at the “novice” (lowest) level and an increase in the proportion of students scoring at the “proficient” or “distinguished” (highest) levels.

Since the data for the third accountability cycle will not be complete until the spring 1998 tests are scored next summer, preliminary performance judgments are not included in this year's score release.

The Department of Education plans to recommend to the General Assembly that the current system of judging school performance be changed within the next school year. This change also is supported by the Assessment and Accountability Issues Group of the Public Education Task Force.

“Many schools are making real progress,” said Education Commissioner Wilmer Cody. “But it's important to remember that these are half-time scores. We've learned in the past six years that midpoint scores can change significantly. Schools with significant gains should not be complacent, and those with smaller or no gains should not be discouraged.”

“The gains over the past five years have been very good,” said Ed Reidy, deputy commissioner of the Bureau of Learning Results Services. “We're seeing impressive gains in all content

areas, with reading and mathematics at the top.”

Since 1993, statewide reading scores at the elementary level have risen 31 points. Reading scores have risen nearly 11 points at the middle school level and 34 points at the high school level. Mathematics scores have risen 22 points at the elementary level, 31 points at the middle school level and 28 points at the high school level.

During the same period, the statewide accountability index (the average score for all students in all subjects) has risen from 36 points to 49 points at the elementary level; from 37 points to 46 points at the middle school level; and from 35 to 50 points

at the high school level. The KIRIS point scale for content areas ranges from 0 to 140, with 100 as the target for all schools. At 100 points, all students in a school, on average, should be at the “proficient”

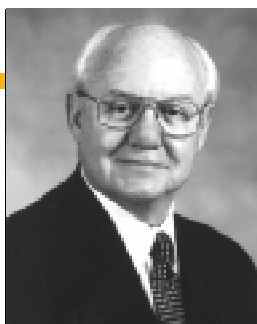
level of performance.

Reidy noted that there are areas of concern for state officials and schools.

“We're seeing that middle schools continue to lag behind, particularly in science, practical living/vocational studies and arts and humanities,” he said. “The difference in gains among different regions of the state also is worrisome, and some individual schools continue to show slow growth or declines.”

This score release marks the midpoint of the third accountability cycle. These scores will be combined with scores from the 1998 round of testing and averaged to determine a school's accountability category.





## Commissioner's Comment

By Wilmer S. Cody, Commissioner of Education

# Help Families Get Comfortable With Today's Changing Schools

Not so many years ago, parents could tell you exactly what their children were doing during the typical day at school. Schools had been essentially the same for generations, and parents and grandparents, aunts and uncles, neighbors and town leaders could picture children doing the same school activities they themselves had experienced years ago. Everyone shared a common understanding of what "school" meant.

But schools — especially Kentucky schools — have changed. The typical school day (if there is such a thing in this era of classroom innovation) is not at all what parents and grandparents remember. Schools have moved beyond the previous generations' realm of experience. Consequently, families can be unfamiliar with school activities and uncomfortable about visiting schools. This reduced comfort level can reduce parents' enthusiasm for getting involved in academic and school governance areas — at a time when family participation in student learning and school decision making is more important than ever.

Few if any educators would deny the importance of family and community support for education, but research indicates that many teachers and administrators need strategies for building positive and productive parent and community partnerships. Joyce L. Epstein of Johns Hopkins University's Center for Research on the Education of Students Placed at Risk reports in the May 1995 issue of Phi Delta Kappan magazine that such educators get stuck in a "rhetoric rut," expressing support for partnerships without taking action.

How can districts and schools

move beyond rhetoric to build effective partnerships with families and communities? A starting point might be Epstein's "10 Steps to School-Family-Community Partnerships" component of the Partnership-2000 Schools project established by Johns Hopkins University.

1. Create an action team for partnerships.
2. Obtain funds and official support.
3. Provide training and guidelines to action team members.
4. Identify starting points — present strengths and weaknesses.
5. Develop a three-year outline.
6. Write a one-year action plan.
7. Enlist staff, parents, students and community groups to help conduct activities.
8. Evaluate implementations and results.
9. Conduct annual celebrations and

report progress to all participants.

10. Continue working toward a comprehensive, on-going, positive program of partnerships.

These 10 steps can guide schools and districts in making school-family-community partnerships a priority in consolidated plans. There is no better time or reason for including students, families and the community in the planning process. Education is variable; it has changed and will continue to change. The need for family and community support remains constant. In such an environment, educators must not only welcome collaboration with families and communities but initiate it. By doing so, everyone benefits — especially students.

For more about Partnership-2000 Schools and school-family-community partnerships, see Pages 5-12 in this issue.



**THE ART OF VOLUNTEERING** — Light from an overhead projector casts artistic designs on parent-volunteer Thelma Spence as she creates a poster at Grassy Elementary School in Martin County. For more about volunteerism at Grassy, see Page 7.

## Excerpts from the Kentucky Board of Education Policy Statement: Parent and Family Involvement Initiative

The Kentucky Board of Education identifies successful family involvement programs as those that accomplish these things:

- create welcoming atmospheres for parents and families
- support parents and families as advocates for lifelong learning and as decision makers in school issues and programs
- promote clear, two-way communications about school programs and students' progress
- assist parents, families and guardians in acquiring techniques to support their children's learning
- involve parents and family members, wherever appropriate, in a variety of instructional and support roles
- provide access to and coordinate community and support services for children and families
- identify and reduce barriers to parent/family involvement
- provide professional development for teachers, administrators and staff on ways to work effectively with parents and families
- provide a copy of the school or district policy on parent and family involvement for each family

For a complete text of this policy, visit [www.kde.state.ky.us](http://www.kde.state.ky.us) on the Internet; write to the Kentucky Board of Education, 500 Mero St., Frankfort, KY 40601; or e-mail [mmiller@kde.state.ky.us](mailto:mmiller@kde.state.ky.us).

# A Creek Runs Through It

## Middle School Unit Receives National Honor, Rejuvenates School, Increases Learning

By Faun S. Fishback  
Kentucky Department of Education

During the summer of 1996, Georgetown Middle School teachers Patty Gibian, Ruth Woodie, Steve Burke and Raymond Perkins marched into the final session of the Kentucky Middle School Curriculum and Assessment Institute carrying a canoe and singing "Rollin' on the River." They were excited about a unit of study, spawned during the institute, that would enhance their school's instructional program. They proposed using Elkhorn Creek as the centerpiece of a unit integrating science and mathematics.

The enthusiasm of new principal John Buckner and the rest of the faculty propelled the plan into a schoolwide unit titled "A Creek Runs Through It." After a school year of ups and downs, the four teachers found their efforts rewarded by a National Middle School Association Teaching Team award. Their unit was one of four national winners chosen from nearly 900 entries. They are the only Kentucky team ever to win the national grand prize.

The four teachers are pleased with the award, but they are more excited with the effect the unit has had on the



Photo by Rick McComb

Paige Hodges measures and records the pH level of water in Elkhorn Creek. The activity is part of Georgetown Middle School's "A Creek Runs Through It" interdisciplinary unit of study.

school. Teachers are enthusiastic about the unit, and students are turning in good portfolio pieces, said Woodie.

What can other schools learn from their experience?

- **Teamwork works.** The team took the idea to the faculty. The faculty found ways to expand the unit

beyond science and mathematics. "The whole school got involved," said Perkins. "The language arts teachers thought the creek was a good prompt for writing. The history teachers could see possibilities."

"One of the successes of the program is that it was not dictated to

the faculty," said Gibian. "We let teachers develop what's right for them to teach."

- **Administrative support is essential.** Buckner, the principal, handles public relations for the project. "He believes in this," said Gibian. "He got information in the local paper, made telephone calls to get the community involved. Teachers don't have time to do these things. You need an administrator to help out."

- **Community support is there if you seek it out.** Team members still marvel that no one has told them no. Once people heard about the project, they called offering help. Since no money is budgeted for the project, community support is essential, Burke said.

- **With the right topic, student learning can occur anywhere.** The four teachers think the project has been successful because the topic is unique to Scott County. It provides a real-life context for learning. However, Woodie stressed, the unit "is not just a visit to the creek. We use the creek activities when it's appropriate to the curriculum."

In November, 14 Georgetown Middle School faculty members attended the National Middle School conference to make presentations and see Perkins, Burke, Woodie and Gibian accept their award and a check for \$3,000. Though the four could have divided the money among themselves, they chose to give \$1,000 to each grade for creek trips and to buy equipment for the unit.

"They want to make sure this is carried on for several years to come," said Buckner. "Their decision shows how important this is to them. Teaching doesn't get any better than that!"

### HOW THE INTERDISCIPLINARY UNIT WORKS

"A Creek Runs Through It" is a schoolwide study of Elkhorn Creek and its significance to the growth and development of Scott County. Each grade at Georgetown Middle School addresses a different aspect of the creek, with intentional overlapping for curricular continuity.

**Grade 6** — Students study "The Elkhorn Across Four Seasons," recording changes in landscape, weather and climate at three creek sites. They use the experience for writing prompts, mathematics and science studies.

**Grade 7** — Students study the history of the creek and the county's early inhabitants. They map the creek areas. Last year they participated in a University of Kentucky archeological dig along the creek.

**Grade 8** — Students take water samples, study erosion effects and conduct cleanups of the creek. They share their sampling results with environmental specialists from Toyota, the county's largest employer.

By making the community their classroom, students have improved their writing skills, teachers say, and increased their awareness of the historical, economic, recreational and environmental importance of Elkhorn Creek to Georgetown. The interaction with parents and local experts who volunteer their time has given students a closer connection to their community.

For specifics, contact teachers Steve Burke, Patty Gibian, Raymond Perkins or Ruth Woodie or principal John Buckner at (502) 863-3805.



# News for Kentucky's Educators

## New Program Links Jobs With Student Performance

A joint venture implemented by the Partnership for Kentucky Schools and the Kentucky Chamber of Commerce will help students see a direct relationship between the grades they make and the jobs they want.

In the Learning Equals Earning program, participating employers will ask entry-level job applicants for evidence of their academic progress. Gov. Paul Patton said this request from employers will send a powerful message to students that their school work matters.

At a news conference in November, Patton endorsed the program, which calls on employers throughout the state to request high school records such as transcripts, portfolios, attendance records and summaries of extracurricular activities and leadership roles. Education Commissioner Wilmer Cody gave his strong support to the program and said the department is already working with school districts to develop easy-to-understand records. Cody added that the new program gives teachers the backing of business when they talk to students about the long-term impact of what they do in school.

The goal is to have 200 Kentucky employers participating by the end of 1998. At least 20 major employers have already expressed support for the program, which can be adopted by businesses of any size. The Partnership for Kentucky Schools, which developed the program in collaboration with the Department of Education and the Workforce Development Cabinet, will assist employers who want to participate.

For details or assistance, contact Carolyn Jones at the Partner-

ship for Kentucky Schools, (606) 233-9849 or (800) 928-2111; fax (606) 233-0760; e-mail [pkgs@mis.net](mailto:pkgs@mis.net).

## National Survey Names Kentucky a Technology Leader

A national survey of education technology calls Kentucky a national leader in the instructional uses of technology. The survey indicated that the state's education technology system has been especially successful in using computers to equalize accessibility to high-quality education in districts at all economic levels.

"Technology Counts," a survey released Nov. 10 by the national publication Education Week, praised these elements of the Kentucky Education Technology System:

- The ratio of students to networkable multimedia computers is 8 to 1, nearing the state goal of 6 to 1.
- Each of the 176 school districts has at least one high-speed connection to the Internet via the state network.
- Almost one-third of the state's 37,500 classrooms are wired to the state network.
- A state-negotiated contract makes hardware, software and networking equipment available to every district at the same prices, giving small districts the same purchasing power as districts buying in larger quantities.

The survey also commended Kentucky for requiring every school to write a technology plan detailing how computers will be used in instruction and how teachers will be trained.

Don Coffman, associate commissioner of the Department of Education's Office of Education Technology, said his office is pleased that Kentucky has received such positive national attention.

"While Kentucky is still moving toward full implementation, we have reached a point where we can see the state's education technology vision

becoming reality," Coffman said. "We have very strong commitment from the executive and legislative leadership to take the program to full implementation and to do the things that must be done to sustain it over time."

## Cody Takes Office as CCSSO President

Kentucky Education Commissioner Wilmer Cody became president of the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) on Nov. 15 during installation ceremonies at the group's annual meeting, held this year in Lexington.

During his one-year term, Cody will direct the work of the council, a nonprofit organization of the 57 public officials who head the departments of elementary and secondary education in the 50 states, five U.S. jurisdictions, the District of Columbia and the Department of Defense Dependents Schools. CCSSO has served as an independent voice on federal education policy since 1927.

CCSSO, with support from foundations and federal agencies, develops projects that assist states with new

policy and administrative initiatives and help the foundations and federal agencies implement programs. The council also publishes research data for use by chief state school officers and their staffs.

## Event to Spotlight School-Community Collaboration

The Kentucky Association of Student Assistance Professionals will hold its annual conference Feb. 26 and 27 in Louisville at the Club Hotel by Doubletree, Bluegrass Parkway at I-64. Workshops will reflect the conference theme, "Schools, Parents and the Community: Making a Difference Together."

The conference is designed for school administrators, board members, counselors, teachers, student assistance professionals and community members. To request a conference brochure, contact Susan Kocher, Maloney Center, 1200 Shelby St., Louisville, KY 40203; phone (502) 636-0296.



Photo by Rick McComb

**SHARING A STORY** — Parent-volunteer Dawn Vowels is the audience — and, if necessary, the helper — as 7-year-old Stacy Adams reads aloud at Price Elementary in Jefferson County. In this issue of *Kentucky Teacher*, Pages 5-12 offer information and resources for increasing volunteerism through strong school-family-community partnerships.



Photo by Rick McComb

**READY TO HELP** — Parent-volunteer Debbie Clough stands by in case Kyleisha Goodwin needs help with a writing assignment at Jefferson County's Price Elementary School.

# Six Partnership Keys Unlock Barriers Between Students and Achievement

**By Fran Salyers**  
Kentucky Department of Education

Imagine someone giving you a set of six keys that would open any door, unlock any barrier, that stands between students and success. The possibilities would be unlimited.

Someone has done just that. A national initiative called Partnership-2000 Schools has provided a framework for uniting schools, families and communities in programs that support teachers, boost student achievement and benefit local families and the community at large. The Partnership-2000 model, built by a team at Johns Hopkins University, is based on research that proves what effective teachers have always known: students do better in school and beyond when their families are active participants in their education. This research-based model asserts that many of the barriers to student achievement can be opened wide when schools, families and communities join forces. The keys to success are six types of involvement:

1. parenting
2. communicating
3. volunteering
4. learning at home
5. decision making
6. collaborating with the community

Every school and district uses at least some of the six keys. Family resource and youth services centers, for example, receive consistently high praise from all quarters for helping families learn child-rearing skills, coordinating the delivery of community services to families and building bridges between families and schools. Service learning programs support in-

struction through projects that encourage students to use their knowledge and skills while serving their communities in meaningful ways. Parents take part in decision making on school councils and committees; families support schools through PTA, PTO and other groups. The examples could fill a year's worth of *Kentucky Teacher*.

Partnership-2000 Schools proposes

that enduring school-family-community partnerships happen when all six keys are in place and working in a systematic way. The next seven pages provide more detail about the six keys. Even schools

that choose not to adopt this model can benefit from its research and information, especially during development of district and school consolidated plans.

Also included are examples of partnership strategies working in Kentucky schools — strategies that represent hundreds more that are just as innovative and effective as the ones featured. The information in this issue is just the tip of an expanding iceberg of data and resources on this topic. The contacts listed throughout the issue can serve as starting points for teachers who want to take full advantage of every resource available — including families and communities — for the benefit of their students and build a network of helpers who can make teaching — and learning — easier, more grounded in real-world application, and more fun!



*For more about Partnership-2000 Schools, see Pages 8-9 and 12.*



# Price Faculty Creates Opportunities, And Families Take Advantage of Them



## Building Partnerships: One Urban School's Experience

By **Faun S. Fishback**  
Kentucky Department of Education

Sara Jacobs Price Elementary School in Jefferson County looks like a community school. However, only about half of Price's 530 students come from surrounding neighborhoods. The rest live miles and sometimes a 45-minute bus ride away. That creates a challenge for involving parents — most of whom work during the day — in school activities.

Principal Carletta Bell and the Price faculty have a family-community involvement mantra: Have children perform ... parents will come. Offer lunch and a speaker ... they will come. Provide a chance to be heard on policies; give needed information; arrange a family activity ... they will come.

When you hear the success stories, you realize Price's approach works. Parents are welcome in any capacity in which they feel comfortable — as observers, learners, advisors, hosts, tutors. "We don't just rely on one avenue," said Bell. "We create opportunities."

Price is one of 17 Kentucky schools participating in the National Accelerated School Project, developed at Stanford University. This means that besides offering students a challenging education, the school seeks ways to include families and the community in the education process. "We always ask, 'Whose voice is missing?'" Bell said.

To include all voices in the decision-making process, Price has four cadres of teachers and parents that make recommendations on curriculum, instruction, communication, school climate and fiscal matters to the school-based decision making coun-

cil. At least four parents serve on each cadre. At least one parent member must be present when a cadre meets to make recommendations final, or the school council will not consider that recommendation.

Parents also have a voice through the PTA. "Parents make a choice to send their children here," said PTA president Debbie Clough. "Once they're here, parents become involved because they want to help their children." The PTA offers families and others a variety of ways to contribute time, materials, money and skills to the school. They may help decorate for a festival, host honor roll parties, assist with fluoride treatments or serve at the annual "Donuts for SAM" (Significant Adult Male) breakfast.

Teachers often have programs such as poetry readings or plays for students to tell their parents what they've

learned. Students in one of Janice James' advanced preparation groups, for example, wrote, produced and presented a fairy tale. James made a videotape of the play available to parents who couldn't attend. In October, the 4th-grade team completed a study of Kentucky and celebrated with an evening "Bluegrass Bash." Teacher Dedra Kuerzi said 200 family members attended to see presentations by the team's 70 students and enjoy food donated by a local restaurant. The 4th-graders also have a portfolio celebration at year's end to show favorite writing pieces to family members.

Zina Knight, a primary teacher, keeps families involved in her classroom through homework sheets that suggest ways parents can help at home or in the classroom. She also gives parents her home phone number at the beginning of the school year. "I

tell them to call me," she said. "If you're worried, I should be worried. Then we'll work it out."

The school's family resource center offers teachers an incentive to involve families. For each hour a volunteer works in a classroom, a "Parent Buck" is deposited in that classroom's account. Melvin Knight, the center's home-school coordinator, says teachers can use Parent Bucks to defray field trip expenses.

Parents and teachers at Price communicate in the usual ways: telephone calls, a newsletter and conferences. They also seize any other opportunity to communicate. New before- and after-school daycare services and a gymnastics program provide such opportunities. Parents and teachers use pick-up and drop-off times to talk with each other about students or assignments or to discuss concerns.

A "McLearning" workshop, co-sponsored by the family resource center and held at a local McDonald's, featured lunch for students' parents with younger children while speakers provided parenting information.

Evening extended school service classes unlock the mysteries of elementary school — mathematics, computers, poetry, open-response questions — for students and family members. These classes have one requirement, said teacher Ann Tharp: Students must be accompanied by a parent or other significant adult.

Melvin Knight, the home-school coordinator, has been in other schools where there was little or no parent involvement. At Price, he said, "teachers and families are totally working together so the children get a better education. This is a group of teachers who work hard, and parents know that. That's why they come to help."



**JoEllen White, a parent-volunteer, teaches songs to preschoolers at Price Elementary.**

Photo by Rick McComb



# Grassy Elementary Partnership Efforts Break Barriers, Change Attitudes



## Building Partnerships: One Rural School's Experience

By Sharon Crouch Farmer  
Kentucky Department of Education

The community served by Grassy Elementary in Martin County hasn't changed much since President Lyndon B. Johnson visited the region in 1968. Jobs are still hard to find, and other needs can surpass education on the priorities list. But caring and commitment to the future are starting to change things.

When Martin County native Peggy Williamson was hired in 1995 to coordinate a Goals 2000 grant, she knew local attitudes would be the biggest barrier to family involvement. "We knew parents were intimidated by the school environment, so we took it one day at a time, one parent at a time, and started trying to bridge the gap," Williamson said.

That gap is narrowing, with more than 800 hours logged by volunteers from August through mid-October, record numbers of parents attending biannual conferences, and parent workshops filled to capacity. A prevailing attitude of communication, caring and commitment are at the core of this growing relationship between school, family and community.

Rose Crum and Pam Blackburn, teachers new to Grassy, said the close involvement with families has changed their outlook. "It has changed my view of teaching, my way of teaching, my life," Blackburn said as parent-volunteer Evelene SESCO sat close by.

Veteran Title I teacher Marsha White said, "Having the option to take this approach and the training to make it work, and then being able to adapt it to meet our needs, has been an important part of our success."

### Home Visits

Goals 2000 training on home visitation prepared teachers to build school-family partnerships, but what about preparing families? Letters to students' families explain home visits and how they might help students. Teachers visit at scheduled times, arriving with small gifts (candles, food samples, crayons) and a summary of the student's strengths. Parents have opportunities to comment on the visits, and teachers must follow up on those comments.

"The first round was hard for both parents and staff, but as word of mouth began to report positive experiences, visits got easier," said Williamson.

Teacher Joni Setser said relationships have dramatically improved. "Parents, teachers and students all see each other as people now — people with lives that they can relate to and neighbors who aren't going to confront them." That personal touch has been the conduit for increasingly successful parent-teacher conferences.

### Parent-Teacher Conferences

"Our parent-teacher conferences are pot luck — almost a party atmosphere," said Williamson, who personally invites each family to attend. Free child care is available. Gift packets of colorful plastic bags filled with cents-off coupons, product samples or other items donated by social service agencies provide an incentive to participate.

"This year, a record 53 parents came. Considering our enrollment is 135, including sibling groups, I feel confident that home-school communication is improving," said Principal Sharla Six. "We're also seeing more fathers come into the school — a definite indicator of change."

Williamson added that the staff tries to make parents feel welcome,



Photo by Rick McComb

At student Michael Ratliff's request, Myrtle Maynard shows her collection of pins, each representing 25 hours of volunteer service. The vest she wears signifies 300 volunteer hours at the school.

needed and valued. "We want them to come back," she said. And they do — to volunteer.

### Volunteers

It's easy to recognize volunteers at Grassy Elementary. Some are wearing lapel pins awarded for 25 hours of volunteer work. Some are wearing burgundy vests signifying 300 volunteer hours. Myrtle Maynard, a grandmother-volunteer, smiles shyly as a visitor comments on her vest and the service it represents. In a flash, she turns to a student who wants to see her pins. "They keep up with them," she says.

Williamson believes volunteers teach important lessons about work and society. "Now children encourage and invite their parents to become involved," she said — and other family members, too. "We had 80 grandparents at the school for Grandparents Day," Williamson said, adding that many of the students live with their grandparents.

### Reach Out and Call

Thanks to the school's new phone system, parents can call in, punch in a number and hear homework assignments, lunch menus, school closings, announcements and other news. One popular feature is "Storytime," each week featuring a different child reading poetry or prose. Last December, more than 3,000 calls came from people wanting to hear seasonal readings by teachers, staff and administrators.

Another boon to communication is that each classroom has a telephone. Students and teachers frequently call from their classrooms to share successes with parents and other family members.

Literacy levels have been slow to rise in Martin County, and jobs are still hard to find. But family and community — Grassy Elementary's biggest resources — are making the future brighter for children.



**By Sharon Crouch Farmer**  
Kentucky Department of Education

Successful partnerships between schools, families and communities don't happen accidentally; they are the result of hard work and a sharing of individual responsibility for — and ultimately the celebration of — student success.

In *School, Family and Community Partnerships: Your Handbook for Action*, a Partnerships-2000 manual published by Johns Hopkins University, Joyce L. Epstein introduces six keys to family and community involvement that can open doors to opportunities for students and achievements that might not otherwise be realized.

Parent involvement and community partnerships pay dividends that extend beyond the schoolyard. In some Kentucky schools, increased involvement by parents and community has changed long-held attitudes, brought in additional funding, increased test scores and boosted enrollment. Here's a sampling of some of the ways Kentucky schools are opening doors and removing barriers with Epstein's six keys.

See Pages 2, 5 and 12 in this issue for more information about Partnership-2000 and how to order the manual and other materials.

# SHARING RESPONSIBILITY

## The National Network Presents Six Keys to Successful Partnerships

### KEY 1

#### Parenting

Assist families with parenting and child-rearing skills, understanding child and adolescent development, and setting home conditions that support children as students at each age and grade level. Assist schools in understanding families.

##### Sample Practices

Workshops; clothing swap shops; neighborhood meetings; food co-ops; videotapes; home visit programs; surveys; parent support, education and training programs.

##### One Kentucky Example: Changing Relationships, Changing Roles

As students move into high school, their needs change, and the role of the parent changes as well. "At the high school level, parents need information about school processes, policies and progress," explained Debbie Howard, coordinator of the Harlan Independent Schools' Family Resource/Youth Services Center. Howard worked with parent members of the school council to gather data on the needs and expectations. Those parents, in turn, got others in the community involved.

"As we talked, parents began to better understand the school environment, pressures and constraints," said Howard, "and we began to understand that these parents were going to play a significant role in turning our school around because they addressed issues on a higher level; they had moved past basic child care issues." For more information, call Debbie Howard at (606) 573-8713.



### KEY 2

#### Communicating

Communicate with families about school programs and student progress through effective school-to-home and home-to-school communications.

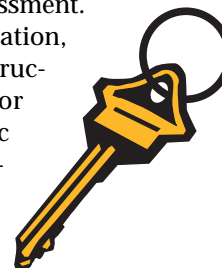
##### Sample Practices

Newsletters; parent conferences; language translators; opportunity for parent review of/comment on student work; preparing information in terms parents can understand; annual surveys on needs/reactions.

##### One Kentucky Example: Parents Follow Progress

When Warren County schools launched a new, computerized primary progress reporting system, parents couldn't understand how to track their children's progress. To help, the district developed a "Map of Primary School Learning Outcomes," an easy-to-follow, color-coded method of tracking progress through the developmental learning stages. A letter to parents explained the reporting system, and a brochure provided more information. A parent survey gathered concerns, attitudes and opinions about the new system. In one survey, 64 percent of the parents said the map was beneficial to their understanding of curriculum and assessment.

For more information, call Judy Glass, instructional supervisor for Warren County Public Schools, at (502) 781-5150.



### KEY 3

#### Volunteering

Improve recruitment, training and schedules to involve families, volunteers and audiences at the school and other locations to support school programs.

##### Sample Practices

Survey families to determine interests and availability; offer centralized resources and meeting space; use parent patrols to increase school safety; identify class parents; start telephone trees.

##### One Kentucky Example: A Family Resource Center Focus on Volunteering

Foust Elementary in the Clay City Independent district combined multiple volunteer efforts (Title I, etc.) into one to eliminate "turf wars" by having it one day at a time, or one time, the school patiently built a volunteer network. By late October, volunteers had already logged over 100 volunteer hours.

Volunteers meet monthly at the Foust Family Resource Center. The center made to civic organization a grandparent program is in collaboration with three colleges and brings in student volunteers. Volunteers are encouraged to volunteer two or more hours a week. A core group of volunteers consistently communicates with other parents. Local media attention to the need for volunteerism has increased community involvement.

For more information, call the principal, at (502) 686-1060.





# ILITIES, SHARING SUCCESS

## Work of Partnership-2000 Schools 1 School-Family-Community Partnerships

### KEY 4

#### Decision Making

Include families as participants in school decisions, governance and advocacy through PTA/PTO, school councils, committees and other parent organizations.

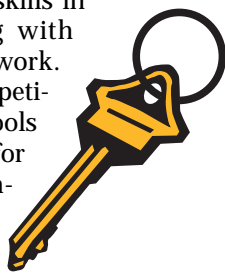
##### Sample Practices

Activate parent organizations; establish networks; create teams to oversee the partnerships.

##### One Kentucky Example: Covington Council Leadership

Since 1995, the Parent Involvement Advisory Council for Covington Independent Schools has concentrated the parent-community involvement efforts of 11 schools into one guiding body. The 60-plus members of the council — teachers, administrators, parents, and board of education and community representatives — plan, develop and promote Title 1 policies and Goals 2000 programs for the district. A council-driven annual needs assessment survey gives all parents a voice. Last year, that voice led the council to organize a volunteer instructional program that teaches skills in tutoring and helping with classwork and homework. The council funds competitive mini-grants to schools with innovative ideas for parent-community involvement programs. The council sponsors a newsletter — “School is for Families, Too” — distributed districtwide to all education stakeholders.

For information, call Trisha Brundage, parent executive for the Parent Involvement Advisory Council, at (606) 292-5811, ext. 129.



### KEY 5

#### Learning at Home

Involve families with their children in learning activities at home, including homework and other curriculum-related activities and decisions.



##### Sample Practices

Educate families on skills and subjects required of students at each level and how to assist them; provide guidance on homework policies and methods and how to monitor schoolwork at home; distribute summer learning packets or activities; provide calendars with daily or weekly activities for parents and students to do at home; provide information on how parents can help students improve skills.

##### One Kentucky Example: Hints for Homework

Paducah Independent's family resource/youth services center, known locally as KERA-CEL, sponsored homework workshops for parents on four Monday evenings in September. Center staff and teachers led discussions on topics such as study skills. Reading, mathematics and science teachers provided parents more specific help. In a follow-up survey, parents said they appreciated the help and enjoyed talking with other parents about common problems.

For information, contact Susan Paul, KERA-CEL coordinator, at (502) 444-5793.

### KEY 6

#### Collaborating With the Community

Coordinate resources and services for families, students and the school with businesses, agencies and other groups and provide services to the community.

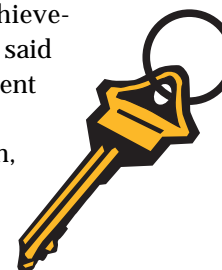
##### Sample Practices

Provide information on community health, cultural, recreational, support or other programs; support service to the community by students and families; seek alumni involvement; provide a centralized contact for family services through partnerships throughout community; link learning skills to community activities.

##### A Kentucky Example: The View From LaRue

The Community Access Partnership with Schools (C.A.P.S) program was developed with a grant from the Kentucky Information Resource Management Commission. C.A.P.S. provides free Internet access to Larue County residents aged 18 or older who are not enrolled in public schools. A site coordinator provides training and support. The service is now available at two schools. “As adults are exposed to and learn about technology, we hope they will help motivate and support student achievements in that area,” said assistant superintendent Ron Benningfield.

Call Susan Willian, district technology coordinator, at (502) 358-4111.



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# A Sampler of Partnership Successes

## Barren County Knows the Value of Volunteers

It's one thing say that having volunteers in schools is important; it's another to put a dollar value on it. The Barren County school district keeps track of volunteer hours. At the end of the school year, volunteer coordinator Nellie Gooden totals the hours donated to academic programs and multiplies the hours by \$5.35 (the district's starting salary for a teacher's aide). In a volunteer recognition ceremony, the district presents to the local school board an oversized mock check representing the amount of money the volunteers saved the district.

While all volunteer support is valued, the district makes this special effort to acknowledge volunteer activities that have a direct impact on academics. "At the end of the 1996-97 school year, 300 volunteers had volunteered 22,222 academic hours," Gooden said. "While our mock check to the board was for \$118,887.70, the contributions these volunteers made can't be bought at any price."

For details, call Nellie Gooden at (502) 659-0166.

## Learning Becomes Teaching, Teaching Becomes Service — in Any Language

The Bowling Green-Warren County community is home to an expanding immigrant population. More than 2,000 immigrants and refugees speak a total of 17 languages other than English, and approximately 400 of those people are P-12 students in the independent and county school systems. To help those in middle and high school learn English, teachers asked them to translate children's books from English into their native languages. The students wrote their translations in the books, over the English words.

As the students improved their own English skills, they took the books into elementary schools to teach younger students. The books went into homes, where parents started learning English with their children. The impact continues to ripple outward, says Russell McIntyre, a linguist with the local community education program serving both districts.

"The older students are learning English," McIntyre said, "but they're also building self-esteem. Teaching others makes them feel important. It empowers them. It makes them want to go to school." One Vietnamese refugee, he said, improved her grades from D's to B's in one nine-week period. "The project helped her see the value of education," he said, "and it gave her an opportunity to be a leader."

McIntyre said the immigrant and refugee families are learning enough English to have at least limited conversations with their children's teachers and transact business in the community. "They feel good when they can order for themselves at McDonald's," he said. "Their confidence grows with their abilities. We can see the results, and we're excited about what's happening."

For details about this service learning activity, phone Russell McIntyre or VISTA volunteer Charlotte Lea, whose idea launched the project, at (502) 842-4281.

## Scott County Citizens Committee Has Impact on Local Education

A citizens committee formed to support a school bond referendum in 1993 did its job so well that the school district asked it to continue helping with other public education issues. The Georgetown-Scott County Citizens Advisory Committee has maintained its focus on continuing and improving the quality of local public schools.

Superintendent Dallas Blankenship calls the committee a "powerful, positive influence" for improving education in the district. "Several hundred parents, teachers, students, lay citizens, school board members and school administrators have worked cooperatively for the past five years to plan and implement strategies in curriculum, personnel, facilities and community relations," he said. "This 'think tank' has provided an opportunity for all citizens to have legitimate and proactive involvement."

What impact has the community's direct involvement in planning and decision making had on education in Scott County? Instructional supervisor Ken Wright reports that the Scott County Board of Education has adopted 75 of the committee's 100 recommendations. The remaining recommendations, while not formally adopted, are tabled for further consideration.

For more information, phone Wright at (502) 863-3663 or send e-mail to [kwright@scott.k12.ky.us](mailto:kwright@scott.k12.ky.us).

## Jessamine County Believes in Getting an Early Start

The Family Center at Nicholasville Elementary reaches out to all students in some form or fashion, starting when they are infants. Director Sally Moore said the family resource center's goal is to help parents want to be involved.

"We provide the traditional services other centers provide. We also offer what I like to call a 'comfort level' for parents," she said. "Our parents feel at ease here. They want to come and take classes or volunteer."

Moore and her staff organize family nights that bring children and their parents to the center for activities, craft sessions and group discussions. The center sponsors Lamaze classes for expectant parents and provides classes on budgeting, infant care and other subjects in conjunction with the local health department. The staff also visits parents with new babies, even if the parents don't yet have children in the school system.

Moore said the work at the center brings rewards to the staff as well as families.

"To see a parent who might have been hesitant to stop by cross the threshold to work on a GED almost brings tears to your eyes," she said. "I think we've shown people that family resource centers can help them in so many ways."

For more information, phone Sally Moore at The Family Center, (606) 885-1011.



# Volunteers Can Extend the Reach of Hard-Working Teachers

By Faun S. Fishback  
Kentucky Department of Education

*Faster than a collating copy machine.  
More powerful than an electronic stapler.  
Able to do four jobs while simultaneously teaching.  
It's Super Teacher!*

Does that describe you? If so, keep reading to learn how family volunteers can be a boon to education and a big help to the hard-working teacher.

The days are gone when school volunteers just bake cookies or make copies, said Patricia Higgins, a primary teacher at Southside Elementary in Shelby County. She wants volunteers directly involved in the students' education. "Having an extra adult in the classroom lets the children see that others are involved in their education. They learn that we're all in this together," she explained.

Higgins said she has welcomed volunteers to her classroom since she began teaching in the '70s, when sharing a classroom with volunteers "wasn't particularly fashionable." She advises teachers to get over the idea

that parents come into the classroom to scrutinize their teaching. "They volunteer because they want to be involved in their children's education," she emphasized.

This year she has two volunteers a total of three days each week. One volunteer is a grandfather, one a mother. Higgins teaches, and a volunteer works one-on-one with students who need extra reinforcement. Higgins closes each lesson by making certain everyone understands what has been taught.

She also has the volunteers help prepare classroom materials and assist with the "itsy bitsy things that I can't ever get to, like filing and recordkeeping," she added.

Higgins said students respond well to the volunteers. "They really look to these people as role models and miss

them when they aren't in class," she said. "It's really a positive experience for all of us!"

Washington County Elementary teacher Lydia Robinson says she "welcomes the extra hands" volunteers provide. She has been welcoming parent volunteers in her preschool classroom for six years. Some years she's had a volunteer every day. This year, because she has a paid instructional assistant, volunteers help with special activities.

"I couldn't do without them," she said. "Parent volunteers help keep everything running smoothly."

At the first of each school year, Robinson sends a note to students' homes, asking for volunteers. She holds a volunteer orientation session to explain the classroom set-up, give volunteers a choice of learning centers to staff, show them where supplies are kept, demonstrate how to operate equipment and discuss confidentiality issues that might arise in the classroom.

Robinson recommends that teach-

ers identify jobs they feel comfortable letting volunteers do. It's also important, she added, for teachers to have materials ready for volunteers (or for volunteers to know where materials are kept).

Robinson said she is excited that the school council has hired a part-time volunteer coordinator. As Principal Pauletta Kutter explained, the council hired Charlotte Parrott to help concentrate on the needs outlined in the school's consolidated plan. There is no family resource center at the school, so this new position is a "beginning point," Kutter said. "I really believe in volunteers. There are many parents who want to be wanted by us."

"There are many ways parents [and others] can be involved at all grade levels," added Higgins, who has volunteered in the school her daughter Monica, a 7th-grader, attends in a nearby district. "Teachers need to know that parents are here to help and help everybody — teachers and students."



**John Wenz, a 57-year-old grandfather, chats one-on-one with Sean Cook as teacher Patricia Higgins works with small groups at Southside Elementary in Shelby County. Wenz volunteers at the school three days a week.**



Photos by Rick McComb

**Parent-volunteer Jeanette Nally guides Jessica Curtsinger and Jenna Taylor in a session on grouping and numbers in Lydia Robinson's classroom at Washington County Elementary.**



# RESOURCES

## for School-Family-Community Partnerships

Because this topic is rising to the top of the priorities lists at the national, state, district and school levels, information and ideas are abundant. On this page are some starting points. All of the resources listed here can lead to many others.



### PROGRAMS

**National Network of Partnership-2000 Schools** — a framework for building and maintaining permanent school-family-community partnerships in any community and learning environment. Contact state coordinator Freida Jacobs Collins, Community and Family Engagement Branch, 17<sup>th</sup> Floor, 500 Mero St., Frankfort, KY 40601; (502) 564-3678; [fcollins@kde.state.ky.us](mailto:fcollins@kde.state.ky.us). To contact the national office, write to Karen Salinas, National Network of Partnership-2000 Schools, Johns Hopkins University, Center on School, Family and Community Partnerships/CRESPAR, 3505 N. Charles, St., Baltimore, MD 21218; phone (410) 516-8818; e-mail [p2000@csos.jhu.edu](mailto:p2000@csos.jhu.edu). (Also see "Publications" and "Web Sites" on this page.)

**Family Resource and Youth Services Centers** — school-based centers that strive to remove non-cognitive barriers to learning by promoting the flow of resources and support to families. Contact Linda Robinson, 17<sup>th</sup> Floor, 500 Mero Street, Frankfort, KY 40601; [lrobinso@kde.state.ky.us](mailto:lrobinso@kde.state.ky.us); (502) 564-6117; or Robert D. Goodlett, Executive Director, Office of Family Resource and Youth Services Centers, 275 East Main St., Frankfort, KY 40621-0001; (502) 564-4986.

**Service Learning** — reinforces classroom learning by engaging students in organized, curriculum-integrated service that meet local needs. Contact Karen Schmalzbauer, Community and Family Engagement Branch, 17<sup>th</sup> Floor, 500 Mero St., Frankfort, KY 40601; (502) 564-3678; [kschmalz@kde.state.ky.us](mailto:kschmalz@kde.state.ky.us).

**Community Education** — leadership for developing local partnerships that encourage citizen involvement, solutions for community and family concerns, opportunities for life-long learning and the expanded use of schools and other public facilities. Contact Joan Howard, 17<sup>th</sup> Floor, 500 Mero St., Frankfort, KY 40601; (502) 564-3678; [jhoward@kde.state.ky.us](mailto:jhoward@kde.state.ky.us).

### PUBLICATIONS

**School, Family and Community Partnerships: Your Handbook for Action** — user-friendly guide from the National Network of Partnership-2000 Schools; outlines an action team approach to organizing and implementing positive and permanent partnerships (see "Programs"). Free to network members. Purchase for \$29.95 paper cover or \$69.95 cloth cover from Corwin Press, (800) 499-9774 or [order@corwin.sagepub.com](mailto:order@corwin.sagepub.com). For a complete list of Partnership-2000 Schools publications, phone Diane Diggs at (410) 516-8808.

**School-Family-Community Partnership: Caring for the Children We Serve** — guide to specific parent involvement requirements of the Title I law; sample policy statements and program hints. Contact Judy Tabor, Office of Special Instructional Programs, 8<sup>th</sup> Floor, 500 Mero St., Frankfort, KY 40601; (502) 564-3791; [jtabor@kde.state.ky.us](mailto:jtabor@kde.state.ky.us).

**Mediation for Students With Disabilities** — helps school staff and parents of children with disabilities understand the mediation process. Contact Jacque Hukill, Community and Family Engagement Branch, 17<sup>th</sup> Floor, 500 Mero St., Frankfort, KY 40601; (502) 564-3678; [jhukill@kde.state.ky.us](mailto:jhukill@kde.state.ky.us).

### ORGANIZATIONS

**Forward in the Fifth**, 433 Chestnut St., Berea, KY 40403; (606) 986-3696. A variety of family support resources and services to southeastern Kentucky schools and districts.

**Kentucky Coalition of School Volunteer Organizations**, 110 S. Main St., Elizabethtown, KY 42701. Wealth of resources includes a how-to manual for establishing and maintaining school volunteer programs. Contact Lillie Sullivan, Hardin County Board of Education, at (502) 769-8862.

**Kentucky Congress of Parents and Teachers (PTA)**, PO Box 654, Frankfort, KY 40602; (502) 564-4378. Trainers available to work with schools and districts to implement the national PTA's parent involvement model and to prepare local trainers to expand it.

**The Prichard Committee for Academic Excellence**, PO Box 1658, Lexington, KY 40592-1658; (800) 928-2111 or (606) 233-9849. Offers Parents and Teachers Talking Together, which facilitates dialogue between parents and teachers. Sponsors (with the Kentucky Congress of Parents and Teachers and the Association of Older Kentuckians) the Commonwealth Institute for Parent Leadership, which trains parents to become leaders in local partnership efforts.

**Kentucky Community Education Association** — networking and training opportunities for Kentuckians interested in community education concepts. Contact Nancy Firkins, director, Bowling Green-Warren County Com-

munity Education, PO Box 1320, Bowling Green, KY 42102-1320; (502) 842-4281.

### WEB SITES

**National Network of Partnership-2000 Schools** (<http://www.csos.jhu.edu/p2000>) — information and publications for the nation's 688 member schools and all other schools and districts looking for a structured approach to continuing school-family-community partnerships

**Partnership for Family Involvement in Education** (<http://www.ed.gov/PFIE/index.html>) — U.S. Department of Education site about national initiatives and links to dozens of resources

**Kentucky Department of Education** (<http://www.kde.state.ky.us>) — family and community engagement information within sections about various programs; also click on "For Students and Parents"

### Coming in June . . .

The Kentucky School Public Relations Association and the Kentucky Department of Education's Office of Communication Services are planning one-day workshops to support districts and schools in building relationships with their communities and within their own staffs. Watch for more information about these workshops, tentatively scheduled for June.

If you need details now, contact Public Information Director Armando Arrastia at [aarrasti@kde.state.ky.us](mailto:aarrasti@kde.state.ky.us) or (502) 564-3421.

# ¡Felicidades a la Maestra del Año!

## Congratulations to the Teacher of the Year!

By Lisa Y. Gross  
Kentucky Department of Education



### 1998 Kentucky Teacher of the Year

Whether she says it in English or Spanish, Kentucky's 1998 Teacher of the Year has a universal message: Teach well and prepare your students for life. Susan B. Stucker, who teaches Spanish at Ashland Independent's Paul G. Blazer High School, has 14 years of experience in leading students to be high achievers.

"My greatest accomplishment has been producing young, prepared, responsible adults who love to learn and who have proven to be lifelong learners," she said. "Seeing them grow up to be the most successful individuals they have the ability to be is most rewarding to me as an educator."

Teacher of the Year is just the latest in the many awards and accolades recognizing Stucker's excellence in

teaching. She received the \$25,000 Milken Family Foundation Educator Award in 1995 and the Ashland Inc. Teacher Achievement Award in 1995.

Stucker will represent Kentucky in the national teacher of the year competition, scheduled for spring 1998. She will serve as an education ambassador in Kentucky and other states, spreading the word about the rewards of teaching.

Stucker earned a bachelor's degree from the University of Alabama-Birmingham and a master's degree from Morehead State University. She is a member of the National Education Association, the Kentucky Education Association and the American Council on Teaching of Foreign Languages.



### Elementary School Teacher of the Year

Union County teacher Sandra Chandler is Kentucky's Elementary School Teacher of the Year. She teaches primary students at Uniontown Elementary and has 10 years of teaching experience.

"For me, the greatest reward in teaching is the desire to learn, to discover, to 'dig for precious treasure' that ignites within the student," Chandler said. "In the end, I have failed as a teacher if my students aren't excited about learning and life."

Chandler has a bachelor's degree from Asbury College and a master's degree from Western Kentucky University. She also attended Henderson Community College. Chandler has participated in school-based decision making leadership training, effective schools training and portfolio scoring training. She is a member of Uniontown Elementary's school council.



### Middle School Teacher of the Year

Daviess County teacher Pamela S. Burns is Kentucky's Middle School Teacher of the Year. She teaches language arts at College View Middle School and has 17 years of experience as a teacher.

"Each and every day, my goal is to enable students to have successful classroom experiences," Burns said. "That they believe they can think and have personal value are the most important lessons I teach."

Burns earned a bachelor's degree and Rank II lifetime certification from Western Kentucky University. She is a member of the National Education Association, the Kentucky Education Association and the National Association for Gifted Children.

### How Does Kentucky Choose a Teacher of the Year?

Each year, the Department of Education calls for nominations from the school districts. A panel of judges (educators, businesspeople, lawmakers, media representatives or others) reads the nominations and applies a scoring and interview system to select a teacher of the year at each level (elementary, middle and high school). The teacher with the highest score becomes the Kentucky Teacher of the Year, representing the state at the national level and serving as an ambassador for the teaching profession.

The next call for nominations will come in spring 1998. In the meantime, direct questions or comments to Donna Melton, 1921 Capital Plaza Tower, 500 Mero St., Frankfort, KY 40601; [dmelton@kde.state.ky.us](mailto:dmelton@kde.state.ky.us); (502) 564-3421.

# KET Announces Programs for February

Kentucky Educational Television plans to offer the following teacher professional development seminars by subscription on its Star Channels during February. For details, call KET Professional Development toll free at (800) 432-0951. For additional KET professional development information, go to KET's home page on the World Wide Web ([www.ket.org](http://www.ket.org)).

## February

- Primary Writing: Building the Foundation the Write Way (part 2 of 3)

- National Standards for Foreign Language Learning: Strategies, Technologies and Assessment (part 2 of 3)
- Preparing for KIRIS Assessment in the Arts and Humanities
- Developing Connections Using "Different Ways of Knowing" (part 2 of 4)
- A Year in a High School Writing Classroom (part 3 of 4)
- High School Math and Block Scheduling (two programs)
- Coaching Clinic: Baseball (three programs)

## Competition Gives National Recognition to Nation's Best Student Writers

High school English departments may nominate high school juniors for a competition designed to give public recognition to some of the best student writers in the nation.

The National Council of Teachers of English sponsors the Achievement Awards in Writing competition, in which each nominated student submits an impromptu theme written in two hours under teacher supervision and a "best work" writing in prose or verse. Winners will be notified in Oc-

tober of their senior year, and their names will be published in a booklet mailed to admissions directors at 3,000 colleges and universities. NCTE recommends the winners for college admission and financial assistance.

Schools must submit nominations to NCTE no later than Jan. 23. Writings are due April 21. Specific information, eligibility requirements, nomination procedures and forms are available from NCTE, 1111 W. Kenyon Road, Urbana, IL 61801-1096.

## Coming Up on 'Inside Kentucky Schools' ...



### Jan. 10

- "GARGAMEL," a virtual monster, comes to life at the hands of 43 primary classes submitting adjectives via the Internet.

- Squires Elementary students create historical heritage exhibits for display at a Lexington museum.

- Byck Elementary students in Jefferson County collaborate with Walden Community Theater to produce A Midsummer Night's Dream.

- In another segment on non-violence in schools, Liberty High School students talk about a required six-week course designed to give them the life skills they need to be successful in school and beyond.

Watch the Department of Education's "Inside Kentucky Schools" on the second and fourth Saturdays of every month at noon ET (11 a.m. CT) on KET. (Note: Special holiday programming replaces the presentation normally scheduled to air on Dec. 27.)

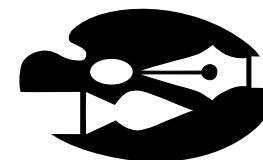
Here's what the next two programs will feature:

### Dec. 13

- Kennedy Montessori in Jefferson County teaches students to resolve conflicts peaceably.

- Allen County High School students test their understanding of scientific subjects and sharpen their communication skills by researching and writing articles for publication in The Allen County Times-Citizen.

- Perryville Elementary 6th-graders operate the Perryville 1860 Reproduction Company, making toys, games and crafts to sell over the Internet and in local historical districts.



## Poster Contest Deadline is Feb. 6

Feb. 6 is the deadline for entries in the seventh annual U.S. Savings Bonds Poster Contest for students in grades 4 through 6. Winners at the state and national levels receive savings bonds. The theme for this year's competition is "Take stock in America with U.S. savings bonds."

For details, visit [www.savingsbonds.gov/com/comstu99.htm](http://www.savingsbonds.gov/com/comstu99.htm) on the World Wide Web or write to National Student Poster Contest, Bureau of the Public Debt, Savings Bonds Marketing Office, Room 318, 999 E St., N.W., Washington, DC 20026.

## Department Publications Win National Awards

Two publications produced by the Department of Education's Division of Public Information have won three national awards for 1997.

- *Kentucky Teacher* won second place in the Newspapers category in the National Association of Government Communicators' 1997 Blue Pencil/Gold Screen Competition.

- *Kentucky Teacher* won second place in competition sponsored by the National School Public Relations Association.

- *Going for the Goals ... and Be-*

*yond* won third place in the Annual Reports category in competition sponsored by the National Association of Government Communicators. The 16-page publication is a status report on Kentucky's progress toward achieving education goals established by the nation's governors.

*Kentucky Teacher*, published nine times during the traditional school year, delivers information and ideas designed to support 40,000 teachers in implementing education reform at the classroom and school levels. The

department also delivers the publication to state legislators, state and local board members, parent representatives on school councils, elected local officials, civic leaders and others to keep them informed about public education programs.

In 1993, *Kentucky Teacher* won a national first-place award in Blue Pencil/Gold Screen competition. The publication has won first-place awards in state-level Kentucky Association of Government Communicators competitions every year since 1992.



# THE Bulletin Board

## Open-Captioned Films and Videos Available

Captioned Films and Videos, a federal program, makes more than 4,000 open-captioned films and videotapes available free of charge for teachers to use with students who have hearing difficulties. These instructional films and videotapes require no special equipment or decoders to view. Also available are lesson guides, catalogues and other resource materials.

CONTACT: Genny Lyman, Kentucky School for the Deaf, 303 South 2nd St., PO Box 27, Danville, KY 40423-0027; (606) 239-7017; Web site [www.sfv.org](http://www.sfv.org)

Compiled by Lisa York Gross  
Kentucky Department of Education

## TAPESTRY Grants Will Fund Science Innovations

Have an innovative science teaching idea you'd like to get off the ground? The Toyota TAPESTRY program could be your launching pad. Fifty grants totaling \$500,000 will be awarded to teachers this school year. The application deadline is Jan. 22. Information is available on the Internet at [www.nsta.org/programs/toyota.htm](http://www.nsta.org/programs/toyota.htm).

CONTACT: NSTA/Toyota TAPESTRY, 1840 Wilson Blvd., Arlington, VA 22201-3000; (800) 807-9852; [pbowers@nsta.org](mailto:pbowers@nsta.org)

## Summer Institute Offered for History Teachers

The National Humanities Center will offer a summer institute for high school history teachers interested in learning about the effects of the landscape on North Americans. "Nature Transformed: Imagination and the North American Landscape" is scheduled for June 22-July 10 in North Carolina. The application deadline is March 1. Stipends are available.

CONTACT: Summer Institute Office, National Humanities Center, PO Box 12256, Research Triangle Park, NC 27709; (919) 549-0661; Web site [www.nhc.rtp.us:8080](http://www.nhc.rtp.us:8080)

## New Resource Helps Teachers Teach Keyboarding Skills

A new 24-page book, Kentucky CyberKeys: A P-8 Guide to Keyboarding, provides strategies for teaching students a critical lifelong skill while helping them use computers in significant ways, including portfolio development. This guide was developed by a 14-member task force of curriculum, instruction, technology, business/technical education and school administration leaders. In January the Department of Education will mail a copy to each public school district superintendent, school principal, technology coordinator, instructional technology leader and business teacher. The pages may be photocopied for wider distribution. (The department will post the book plus related research on the World Wide Web in the future.)

CONTACTS: Local educators scheduled to receive the book; Gary Colvin, (502) 564-3775, [gcolvin@kde.state.ky.us](mailto:gcolvin@kde.state.ky.us); Steve Small, (502) 564-3775, [ssmall@kde.state.ky.us](mailto:ssmall@kde.state.ky.us)

## Textbook Reviewers Needed

Kentucky educators and parents are invited to apply to review P-12 printed and electronic textbooks and instructional materials. The content areas for review are reading, literature, foreign language, visual arts, theater, humanities, music, practical living (physical education/health/wellness) and driver's education.

The Department of Education and the State Textbook Commission will coordinate the review. Reviewers will meet for one day in April to receive training and establish evaluation criteria. The team will meet July 20-24 to review instructional resources and develop recommendations for the commission.

By state law, reviewers must represent specific areas of experience and expertise. Teams will include parents and educators and will be balanced in gender, geographic and ethnic diversity. Reviewers will receive a stipend and expense reimbursement. The deadline for applications is March 1.

CONTACT: Carol Tuning or Jay Roberts, 18th Floor, 500 Mero St., Frankfort, KY 40601; (502) 564-2106; [ctuning@kde.state.ky.us](mailto:ctuning@kde.state.ky.us) or [jroberts@kde.state.ky.us](mailto:jroberts@kde.state.ky.us)

## KETC Is Just Around the Corner

Get a discount by registering before Feb. 13 for the Kentucky Education Technology Conference, set for March 5-8 at the Commonwealth Convention Center in Louisville. The conference will feature hands-on sessions and workshops, demonstrations and featured speakers, including multiple intelligences author Carolyn Chapman, teacher training specialists Marianne Handler and Neal Strudler, and keynote speaker Alan November. Also of special interest: panelists from all regions of the state will discuss effective ways of using and integrating technology in professional development programs.

Registration forms were mailed to all teachers in the November issue of *Kentucky Teacher*. Forms are also available from KETS coordinators at each Department of Education regional service center or on the Internet at [www.kde.state.ky.us/ketc98](http://www.kde.state.ky.us/ketc98).

CONTACT: Lydia Wells Sledge, 19th Floor, 500 Mero St., Frankfort, KY 40601; (502) 564-7168; [lsledge@kde.state.ky.us](mailto:lsledge@kde.state.ky.us)

Coming Soon . . .

## A New 'Front Door' to the State Education Home Page

The Department of Education is remodeling its site on the World Wide Web. A redesigned home page will make the site's ever-expanding resources easier to find and use.

While the concept for the new home page evolved within the department, it will go online only through the technical assistance of several Jessamine County student technology leaders and their adult assistants. The department thanks the following people for their skills and contributions to the project:

- Matt Ryavec, junior, West Jessamine High School — Webmaster and mastermind behind new Web automation
- Charles Ross, Josh Fleckinstein, Josh Shepherd, Matt Johnson, Julie Veronesi, Aaron Isenhour, Steven Hamm, Dan Wier, Justin Beckham — student Web development team
- Jordan Block, freshman, East Jessamine High School — graphic artist
- Larry Allen — superintendent and visionary
- Carol Utay — district technology coordinator
- Charlanne Pook — district technology trainer
- Joel Hawkins — trainer/consultant from Stone Soup, Inc.

Watch the Department of Education's redesigned home page, scheduled to go online in the next few weeks. Please e-mail the department's Web site manager, David Thurmond ([dthurmon@kde.state.ky.us](mailto:dthurmon@kde.state.ky.us)), to let us know what you think of the new "front door" to a wealth of information about public education in Kentucky.

<http://www.kde.state.ky.us>

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Kentucky Teacher is published by the Kentucky Department of Education for teachers, school administrators, counselors, support staff, parents, students, legislators, community leaders and others who support public education. Please address correspondence to *Kentucky Teacher*, 1919 Capital Plaza Tower, 500 Mero St., Frankfort, KY 40601; e-mail [KyTeach@kde.state.ky.us](mailto:KyTeach@kde.state.ky.us).

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Printed with state funds by the Winchester Sun, Winchester, Ky., on recycled paper

# Kentucky Teacher

News for the Nation's Most Innovative Educators

DECEMBER 1997 - JANUARY 1998



Photo by Rick McComb

**READ-ALoud TIME** — Six-year-old Ivy Nguyen follows the book closely as she reads aloud to a volunteer at Price Elementary School in Jefferson County. For more about school-family-community partnerships at this school and others, see Pages 5-12.

## INSIDE . . .



- Six Keys to School-Family-Community Partnerships . . . Pages 2 and 5-12
- Gains in KIRIS Scores . . . . . Page 1
- National Award for Georgetown Teaching Team . . . . . Page 3
- Kentucky's 1998 Teachers of the Year . . . . . Page 13
- News and Opportunities . . . . . Pages, 4, 14, 15

Kentucky Department of Education

Wilmer S. Cody, Commissioner